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Outcome of the Workshop on Governance for World Summit on Sustainable Development Implementation in Countries with Economies in Transition

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development the outcome of the Workshop on Governance for World Summit on Sustainable Development Implementation in Countries with Economies in Transition.

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Outcome of the Workshop on Governance for World Summit on Sustainable Development Implementation in Countries with Economies in Transition

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I. Introduction

1. The Workshop on Governance for World Summit on Sustainable Development Implementation in Countries with Economies in Transition was convened in Istanbul from 16 to 18 September 2003, hosted by the Government of Turkey.

2. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, reaffirmed sustainable development as a central element of the international agenda and gave a new impetus to global action to fight poverty and protect the environment. The understanding of sustainable development was broadened and strengthened as a result of the Summit, particularly with regard to the important linkages between poverty, the environment and the use of natural resources. Governments agreed to, and reaffirmed, a wide range of concrete commitments, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, as well as targets for action to achieve more effective implementation of sustainable development objectives. The views of civil society were given prominence in recognition of the key role of civil society in implementing the outcomes and in promoting partnership initiatives.

3. Member States were challenged to ensure that national policies balance short-term economic benefits with medium- and long-term objectives for economic and social development and environmental protection. Public administration and governance were given a role to play in achieving this goal through integrating the issues of sustainable development into governmental policy-making in all fields and at the local, national, regional, and global levels. In its resolution 50/225 of 1 May 1996, the General Assembly stated that there was a critical need for improved efficiency and effective public institutions, administrative procedures and sound financial management to address the global challenge to promote sustainable development in all countries. Creating and strengthening institutional frameworks for sustainable development in countries with economies in transition was emphasized in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) that was adopted at the Summit.

4. Countries with economies in transition face the challenge of having to fully equip their public institutions in order to achieve the goal of sustainable development. They will need to overcome sector-based approaches and proceed with an integrated economic, social and environmental approach so as to create a long-term frame of reference that can serve as a guide to development actions and policies. This integrated approach will have to take into account both macroeconomic factors and the need for short-term structural adjustments, allow for the possibility of addressing many vital problems (such as health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation, air quality and employment), take into consideration the development of each sector and promote sustainable development at all levels.

5. Prior to the Summit, a workshop on capacity-building in governance and public administration for sustainable development in countries with economies in transition was organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, through its Division for Public Administration and Development Management. The workshop was hosted by the Government of Greece in Thessaloniki, from 29 to 31 July 2002, and brought together senior government officials from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia as well as

representatives of non-governmental organizations from those regions. The report of that workshop was made available to the participants of the workshop held in Istanbul.

6. The purpose of the Istanbul Workshop was to follow up on the outcomes of the Summit, taking into account the results of the workshop held in Thessaloniki. Specifically designed for countries with economies in transition, the Istanbul Workshop aimed to: (a) report on the status of implementation of the Summit outcomes; (b) identify national priorities for implementing the outcomes; (c) explore means of implementing the outcomes through options for institutional arrangements, governance and public administration reform, national strategies for sustainable development, capacity-building and promoting the role of civil society in decision-making; and (d) promote intraregional cooperation through the exchange of national experiences with implementing Agenda 21 and with expediting implementation of the Summit outcomes at national and regional levels.

II. Panel discussions

Workshop session 1
Country experiences

7. The session began with presentations by six panellists, including three government officials and three representatives from major groups.

8. The representative of Poland explained that the constitution of her country referred directly to sustainable development. A number of long-term national strategies and policies had already been put in place, such as those for renewable energy and waste management; others were in progress, including those for sewage treatment, production and consumption patterns and climate change. A board on sustainable development had been established, including representatives from a number of ministries, scientists and representatives from business, industry and non-governmental organizations. The purpose of the board, which reported to the Prime Minister, was to coordinate and monitor the implementation of sustainable development commitments. Institutional arrangements were also in place at the local level. Many local governments had developed their own strategic development plans on the basis of Agenda 21 principles. Actions identified for further development in Poland included improving the integration of economic, social and environmental issues, enhancing the development of intersectoral partnerships and consulting more extensively with civil society.

9. The representative of Hungary explained that the requirements associated with European Union (EU) integration had changed the national decision-making process and had motivated Hungary towards sustainability. The Government had incorporated sustainable development principles into relevant sector policies, such as transport and energy. A national sustainable development strategy process — initiated prior to the Summit and planned for completion before 2005 — had involved broad public dialogue and consensus-building. For improved coordination, it was planned that a national council for sustainable development should be established, which would include high-ranking officials, local authorities, scientists, workers, employers, youth and environmental non-governmental organizations. The Government had also started working on a 10-year framework for sustainable production and consumption patterns with broad public participation. Further

education and awareness-raising were needed as sustainable development principles needed to be more broadly known and understood.

10. The representative of Belarus explained the process of developing a national strategy in his country. A coordination committee "think tank" had been established to discuss ideas. The strategy had also been amended in the light of widespread public consultation involving all interested parties. Various economic and social measures had been undertaken to implement the strategy, bearing in mind such issues as democracy, poverty alleviation, protection of the environment, international cooperation and health. Positive effects of the strategy had been that the process of sustainable development has been institutionalized in Belarus, with a concrete framework established, taking into consideration international trends and public opinion.

11. The panellist representing the Eco-Accord Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, located in the Russian Federation, said that newly independent States commonly lacked a strong environmental authority, which was a particular concern given that the Russian Federation had signed very few multilateral environmental agreements in recent years and had ratified even fewer. The decision-making process was not considered to be open and transparent, and a national council for sustainable development in the Russian Federation was needed with full multi-stakeholder participation. The existing multi-stakeholder approach was not yet as effective as it could be; it was often organized very late in the process, senior officials rarely took part in it and not all stakeholders were equally involved. The Summit had been helpful in placing a number of important issues high on the political agenda in the Russian Federation, such as water and education for sustainable development. She hoped that the same would happen for other issues that had been prioritized at the Summit.

12. The President of the Society for Sustainable Living, located in Slovakia, stated that the decision-making process for implementing sustainable development activities at national and subregional levels depended on the involvement of all relevant partners, such as intergovernmental organizations, ministries, towns and local associations. Some countries had a more positive attitude than others towards involving non-government actors. One of the main problems in implementing sustainable development was identified as a lack of interest by decision makers, media and the public alike. Cross-sectoral programmes with real support mechanisms were needed at all relevant levels and included such key features as integration, a long-term approach, partnerships, participation and solidarity.

13. The Chairperson of the Board of the Green Network of Vojvodina, located in Serbia and Montenegro, said that there was no national strategy for sustainable development in her country, nor were sustainable development elements included in other sectoral strategies. Only the Ministry of Environment gave sustainable development any consideration. She felt that the Government was indifferent to sustainable development and had made little effort to understand Agenda 21 and related documents. The inadequate legal framework made environmental protection at the local level nearly impossible. The Green Network of Vojvodina had been working on a practical project to help rural farmers by educating them about organic food production and community tourism opportunities. She felt that other non-governmental organizations could help by promoting public awareness activities, such as cooperating with the media, educating decision makers and helping

universities and agricultural colleges to understand sustainable development issues. Countries with economies in transition needed assistance from developed countries, such as through the transfer of technologies, to avoid falling further behind.

14. Following the panel presentations, an interactive dialogue was held with other participants, focusing on concrete steps that needed to be taken at the national level to implement sustainable development. The outcome of the discussion is reflected in section III below.

Workshop session 2
Institutional issues

15. The session began with presentations by five panellists, including two government officials, one major group representative and two resources persons.

16. The panellist representing the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat began the session with a presentation on national strategies for sustainable development. The comprehensive presentation covered global targets, initiatives that had been undertaken in this area by the United Nations and by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the global status of implementation of the strategies, as well as their evolution, definition, principles and characteristics. The representative also explained the process of participation, the reasons why the strategies required constant improvement and, finally, the major challenges that faced Governments in developing and implementing them.

17. The representative of Belgium, who served as a resource person for the Workshop, described her Government's experience with developing and implementing strategies. She explained that development of a strategy not only involved decision-making, but also provided a framework that defined how decisions were to be taken. In the Belgian federal strategy on sustainable development, strong involvement of all relevant departments was crucial, as was widespread consultation and coordination. The interdepartmental commission on sustainable development had formulated a preliminary draft plan at the federal level, on the basis of the first federal report on sustainable development and the council for sustainable development had given advice on the draft plan. Thirty per cent of the draft plan had been changed as a result of this advice and wide consultation. The Belgian Government had discussed the draft plan at length and had adopted a final plan. When some of the suggestions received from the council had not been taken into consideration by the Government, legislation had required the Government to explain why. The Government of Belgium had just completed its second federal report on sustainable development, thus beginning the second strategy cycle at the federal level.

18. The representative of Bulgaria explained that sustainable development had been clearly stated as a primary policy objective in two key Bulgarian documents: a national economic development plan and the EU pre-accession economic programme. Efforts had been made to communicate the goals and priorities of the plans to the general public. The medium-term budgetary framework was interlinked with policies to facilitate sustainable development. Two major institutions were responsible for sustainable development in Bulgaria: a national commission for sustainable development, including ministers from five departments, and a coordination council, chaired by the Minister of Finance. In terms of challenges, the

involvement of civil society was still proving hard to achieve, due in part to a lack of education, a passive attitude towards government initiatives, the ongoing effects of the former regime, and turbulent transition. Other problems were related to financial resources; for example, EU structural funds needed to be complemented with national assets but it was difficult to attract private-sector investment in such projects.

19. The representative of the Czech Republic explained that the environmental and sustainable development renaissance of the country had begun in 1990. In 1995, a state environment policy had been adopted that recognized the principles of sustainable development and the need to integrate policies into other sectors. This policy had been updated every two to three years. Sectoral strategic policies incorporating the principles of sustainable development had been developed since 1997 in areas such as energy, regional development and minerals. In 1999, a council for social and economic strategy had been created. Working groups on sustainable development had then been formed for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development programme on sustainable development (2000-2003) and national preparations for the Summit (2002). From 1998 to 2001, a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project on building national capacity for sustainable development had led to the proposal for a national sustainable development strategy (2001). The promotion of sustainable development had been an integral part of Czech policy since 2002. A council for sustainable development had been established in August 2003. The council, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, had 28 members including major groups and parliamentarians as well as senior government officials. Its main objective in the forthcoming year was to elaborate a strategy for the Czech Republic by June 2004.

20. The President of the Association for Sustainable Human Development, located in Armenia, explained that Armenia faced many difficulties in developing a national strategy. She felt that national mechanisms were very important but that local councils were also useful. Despite what had been stated at the Summit, the general situation in many newly independent States was worsening. The process of transition to sustainable development had to be considered in parallel with the transition period. Social, environmental and economic considerations needed to be combined, but they were still far apart — if not getting further apart — in newly independent States. Significant training was needed in those countries as they were far behind others in many respects. Given the complexity of the situation, it was necessary to compare the situation with that in other similar countries. She suggested the need for a different set of indices to measure sustainable development for developed countries, developing countries and for countries with economies in transition, based on UNDP data, that took into account their respective situations.

21. After the panel presentations, the participants convened into small groups. The results of their collective deliberations are reflected in section III below.

Workshop panel 3
Civil society and the private sector

22. The workshop began with presentations from five panellists, each from a major group.

23. The representative of the Institute for Environmental Policy, located in the Czech Republic, explained that — from his experience — dialogue and cooperation

between civil society and the public sector were generally easiest at the local level. It was more difficult at the national level due to the large number of non-governmental organizations, and the disparity between the narrow focus of their work and the breadth of sustainable development issues. He said it was important to include civil society in the decision-making process for sustainable development, such as by having non-governmental organization representatives on national councils for sustainable development and stakeholders involved in the preparation of national strategies. Progress had been made regarding the involvement of civil society at the international level but more needed to be done. It was particularly complicated to find representatives at the international level owing to the heterogenic nature of civil society; those involved at the international level were often not connected with local groups.

24. The Dean of the Faculty of Horticulture, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, located in Romania, discussed sustainable development activities relating to rural and farm communities in Romania. One third of the population lived in rural areas and there were over four million farms. Maintaining a sustainable rural society was, therefore, a critical issue for Romania. Judicious use of natural resources was needed for the long-term stability of the agricultural sector. The University had provided a consultancy service to support farmers with technological, ecological and economical practices. He believed it was important for farms to reach an optimum size (which varied according to the type of farming) and to increase the yield per hectare. He also considered the involvement of civil society at the national level to be important.

25. The President of the Environmental Youth Association, located in Bosnia and Herzegovina, explained how her organization had been involved in a number of small-scale sustainable development projects, many related to raising awareness. One of their education projects had resulted in environmental education being included in school curricula, providing a good example of how youth groups could be effective on a practical level. She explained that many environmental non-governmental organizations in her country had no paid staff or equipment, and needed to raise their own funds for projects. The role of civil society was particularly important in her country where great efforts were needed to improve the environment so that displaced persons could return.

26. The President of the Liberal Society Institute, located in Ukraine, focused on gender issues within the sustainable development process. International women's networks had worked closely together, developing common positions to maximize the effectiveness of their lobbying. They had achieved some success on gender issues at the Summit, but were disappointed that most gender references related to education and health issues rather than to forming a central concept within the scope of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Women in countries with economies in transition had faced a number of particular problems since economic liberalization, and most women had found it difficult to retain or find stable jobs. With privatization, men still held 92 per cent of ownership in such countries. Women still faced discrimination in the workplace. She noted that young women were increasingly being exploited by the intra- and inter-country sex trade; women were also the victims of domestic violence. They were underrepresented in the new political system, particularly at the national level. Their absence at senior policy levels meant that their concerns and priorities were often ignored. Many countries

with economies in transition did, however, have action plans to improve the status of women that they could be considered equal social partners and actors.

27. The representative of business from Georgia explained how her consultancy company was involved with sustainable development issues. For example, it had helped communities to find alternative sources of water supply and had undertaken projects on joint monitoring of transboundary water sources. It had also worked on a new approach to food quality based on a hazard approach, and had tried to resolve the energy problems that had led to deforestation and land degradation. In her experience, Georgia had good environmental legislation, which addressed the responsibilities of government, businesses and developers and also contained requirements for transparency. However, the legislation did not seem to translate into reality and people tended not to become involved since they felt their efforts would have no impact. She suggested that mechanisms were needed to educate people and to empower well-informed communities to influence decision makers.

28. During the ensuing interactive discussion with other workshop participants, a number of proposals were made relating to the role of civil society and the private sector, which are included in section III below.

Workshop session 4
Governance and public administration

29. Six panellists representing a variety of Governments and organizations opened the discussion on this topic.

30. The panellist representing the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat made a presentation on governance and sustainable development related to the follow-up to the Summit. He discussed the challenges of sustainable development as reflected in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The importance of good governance for sustainable development, both within each country and at the international level, was highlighted. He also described several important elements of governance, including institutional arrangements, tools, techniques and institutional processes, such as partnerships and networking. The nexus between governance and sustainable development was reviewed.

31. The representative of the World Bank underlined his organization's commitment to implementing the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. World Bank calculations showed that achieving Goal 7, relating to the environment, would necessitate substantial additional aid, over the next 15 years, to countries with economies in transition. Experience and analysis showed that there was a strong causal relationship between good governance and good development results. While there was no "one size fits all" solution, some elements were generic for good governance, including responsiveness through inclusive and transparent decision-making, efficiency and reliability in providing basic social services, accountability in the way resources were being used, and monitoring results. Through its lending operations and analytical work, the World Bank had contributed to strengthening policies and institutions, such as through regulatory frameworks, strengthening ministries of environment, improving social and environmental safeguards and cooperating with non-governmental organizations.

32. The representative of the Republic of Moldova stressed that activities devoted to the implementation of sustainable development principles in his country were coordinated by a supreme economic council under the President of the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of Ecology, Construction and Territorial Development. An economic growth and poverty reduction strategy had been formulated. It included such issues as the integration of sustainable development principles into every sector of the national economy, combating poverty, the creation of civil society and the restoration of environmental and biodiversity conservation. Since the Summit, the Government had taken steps to attract donors and investors to support programme implementation. He said that international cooperation had played an important role in sustainable development. Most sustainable development problems could effectively be solved only if they were addressed in a regional and global context.

33. The Deputy Mayor of Bourgas, Bulgaria, explained that his municipality had developed a strategy for sustainable development that was being implemented at all levels of society. In 2002, the municipality had started a new initiative to establish an advisory committee on sustainable development, which would be responsible for the development and implementation of the strategy. Members of different parties and stakeholders of the city would participate in the decision-making process. In May 2000, a new municipal strategy for sustainable development, covering the period 2002-2006, was introduced and approved by the city council. The strategy set out the main policy goals and priorities for the future development of the municipality. To implement the strategy, the municipality had developed a number of priority projects in different fields of activity. The Deputy Mayor stressed that good governance had to be introduced and consolidated through such tools as sustainable strategies, local leadership, national policies and networks. He suggested that national and regional sustainable development criteria, such as those existing in EU countries, should be developed.

34. The representative of Kyrgyzstan explained that his country's national strategy for human development included issues relating to public administration and good governance. As a pilot country, Kyrgyzstan — in cooperation with the World Bank — had drafted a strategy for the complex development framework. The document had been approved in May 2001 by the national assembly and included representatives of state authorities, non-governmental organizations, political parties, the mass media and local authorities. The main pillars of the framework were efficient and transparent public administration, equitable human development and sustainable economic growth. The national poverty reduction strategy also emphasized effective administration and good governance. After independence, Kyrgyzstan had undergone public administration reforms, particularly regarding transparency, accountability and the redistribution of power between central and local levels. Recently, it had established a national council on good governance, which was headed by the Prime Minister and included representatives of public authorities, political parties, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community and the mass media.

35. The representative of the Russian Federation explained that the President had approved a concept framework for transition to sustainable development in April 1996. The Government paid significant attention to issues of governance and sustainable development. A department of sustainable development existed within the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. In cooperation with other

departments, the Ministry had been preparing the Russian Federation for the transition to sustainable development. It had also developed a short- and medium-term economic development strategy. The Government had paid particular attention to economic and environmental safety, public procurement and the use of economic and legal instruments to ensure a healthy environment. Russian science had enormous potential, which was being harnessed for sustainable development through government programmes.

Workshop session 5
The role of regional organizations

36. Presentations were made by representatives of four regional organizations that worked closely with countries with economies in transition.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

37. The representative of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) explained that the role of the regional commissions and other regional organizations had been recognized in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the decisions adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eleventh session. A well-established architecture of regional and subregional organizations existed that could effectively assist countries in the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. ESCAP could make important interventions at the policy, institutional and partnership levels. It was playing a vital role in enhancing the capacity of policy makers and institutions, particularly in the planning and management of natural resources and the environment, the development of national strategies and in cohesive policy implementation. Important issues, such as the nexus between poverty reduction and sustainable development, were being addressed in an integrated manner by promoting partnerships between the public and private sectors for the delivery of services to meet the basic needs of the poor, in such key areas as water, energy, health and biodiversity. Pro-poor policies and partnerships were being promoted and multi-stakeholder partnerships were being developed for the sustainable development of cities and improvement of the urban environment. ESCAP had also demonstrated the efficacy of cooperation among countries with economies in transition. For example, in Central Asia, countries were cooperating to develop a subregional strategy for the management of water and energy resources. There had been very active cooperation between ESCAP and other regional and subregional organizations to promote good governance for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

United Nations Development Programme

38. The representative of UNDP explained that her organization had addressed the challenges of economic transition through the provision of technical and financial support and advisory services to programme countries. Since the Summit, the focus of UNDP activities in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region had been on helping countries to develop the capacity for implementing Summit outcomes and reaching the Millennium Development Goals, while promoting democratic governance and sustainable local development. She said that the implementation approach had reflected the widely recognized demand for concrete action towards sustainable development. UNDP had a local presence in 24

countries in Europe and the CIS countries. Its work in the region had fallen into three main areas: promoting democratic governance with a particular emphasis on enhancing good local governance and effective local development; reducing poverty and supporting economic development and viable local economies; and protecting the environment. She further explained that UNDP had assisted programme countries in analysing their priority needs, develop programmes and monitor their implementation. She described Capacity 2015, a new UNDP initiative launched at the Summit to help countries to develop their capacity to benefit from globalization and meet the Goals.

Economic Commission for Europe

39. The representative of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) discussed a number of ways through which regional organizations such as ECE contributed to sustainable development, including: support to national and regional governance; enabling civil society; promotion of integrative and harmonized policies and strategies; and fostering partnerships at national, subregional and regional levels. She stated that one important tool to support national governance was the peer review process, carried out through the environmental performance review programme. Civil society had been significantly empowered through the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), for which ECE is secretariat, through partnerships with major groups in intergovernmental processes, both within ECE and through the environment for Europe process, and through a number of workshops and other activities. Through its five regional conventions and a number of non-binding instruments, ECE had strengthened regional governance for sustainable development and, by implementing these instruments, national governance as well. Harmonization and integration had been furthered through the environment for Europe process. She stressed that many activities in the ECE region were facilitated by strong partnerships among other organizations in the region.

European Commission

40. The European Commission representative presented the EU sustainable development strategy, which had been endorsed in 2001 as the main tool for EU implementation of Summit commitments. The strategy built on the EU Lisbon strategy for economic, social and environmental renewal. It was a major step forward for integrated policy-making, since social, economic and environmental objectives would be discussed together at the highest political level. An external dimension was added to the strategy in the preparatory process for the Summit, addressing trade and development policies, external relations and the impact of EU internal policies on non-EU countries. In the 2003 annual review of the strategy, specific attention had been paid to the implementation of the Summit commitments through the strategy. In 2004, there would be a more thorough review of the strategy with improved stakeholder consultations. The special nature of the relationship between EU and countries with economies in transition, as well as other European neighbours, would also be taken up, especially since 10 new member states were scheduled to join the EU in May 2004.

III. Recommendations

41. Based on its discussions, the Workshop made the recommendations set out below.

A. National experiences

42. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(a) **Better understanding of sustainable development should be promoted at all levels, including within and between the ministries of government;**

(b) **A change of outlook is needed within Governments, not only to make laws but also to ensure that they are properly implemented and that they include civil society participation;**

(c) **Implementation plans, including operational objectives and human resource implications, should be prepared;**

(d) **The social dimension of sustainable development, including priority for decent jobs and safe working conditions, should receive more attention and should be more effectively promoted;**

(e) **Measurable goals and timetables should be established for achieving a critical mass of women in environmental decision-making in order to ensure gender balance in such decision-making within all Governments, national and international agencies, and in environment and sustainable development-related policies and programmes;**

(f) **Additional training and international cooperation are needed in general;**

(g) **Information should be made more available to the public, such as by having it posted on web sites and included in official documents with concrete examples of best practices and possible actions;**

(h) **Education and raising awareness about the importance of sustainable development should be undertaken at all levels, including among parliamentarians, politicians, government officials and the general public and at the workplace.**

B. National strategies for sustainable development and institutional issues

43. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(a) **Governments are accountable for implementing national sustainable development strategies, including the establishment of goals, targets and systems for monitoring their implementation. Civil society, the scientific community and expert groups should also play a role in monitoring and reporting progress, including by providing alternative reports;**

(b) **Countries should consider how their sustainable development strategies correspond with their other national and sectoral strategies in order to promote policy coherence and avoid overlap;**

(c) **Strong leadership and political commitment should be provided to ensure that the implementation of national sustainable development strategies starts no later than 2005 and develops successfully;**

(d) **Decision makers should be trained on sustainable development issues, methodologies and tools for implementing the strategies;**

(e) **Strategy awareness-raising and capacity-building should be undertaken at all levels so that everyone can understand and contribute to the process;**

(f) **The strategies should place equal weight on the three pillars (economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development;**

(g) **The strategy process should incorporate a balanced, cross-sectoral approach, and be linked, where appropriate, to existing international guidelines and strategies;**

(h) **The strategy process should be structured so that changes of government do not interrupt its implementation. In particular, long-term concepts of sustainable development should be developed;**

(i) **The strategy development and implementation process should be fully transparent, inclusive and participatory;**

(j) **Environmental management systems (e.g., ISO 14000, the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) and other tools (e.g., integrated pollution prevention and control, environmental impact assessment, integrated resource management and green procurement programmes) should be fully integrated into national systems for monitoring and reporting on sustainable development;**

(k) **A strong, national coordinating body, such as a national council on sustainable development, with adequate autonomy in the context of an appropriate legal framework, should be established and should include all relevant stakeholders;**

(l) **Support should be increased for improved monitoring systems and for greater coordination of statistical efforts, including improved statistical information that would show progress made towards achieving sustainable development objectives and goals;**

(m) **Governments should design and develop indicators and targets related to sustainable development implementation by drawing on the international work already completed on national indicators of sustainable development, including the assessment of data availability and the use of available data for the compilation of such indicators. Gender-disaggregated data should be included in all monitoring, information and reporting systems on sustainable development at the local, national and regional levels;**

(n) **International peer review for facilitating the implementation of sustainable development policies and programmes should be considered;**

(o) **Strategic environment assessments are an important tool for decision makers to determine, at an early stage, the potential impact of policies and plans on the environment. To promote sustainable development, the application of the assessments should also take into consideration social impacts.**

C. Civil society and the private sector

44. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(a) **Civil society in countries with economies in transition should increase networking and make greater use of modern technologies such as the Internet, e-mail and online discussions to enhance coordination;**

(b) **Greater coordination should be encouraged between trade unions and other major groups, because the workers' movement embraces many elements of society. Decent employment for young people should be given special attention;**

(c) **Governments should make greater effort to work with youth groups. Several key areas in which such collaboration could be beneficial include education, sustainable production and consumption, combating HIV/AIDS, combating trafficking in women, poverty alleviation and youth employment programmes;**

(d) **Effective cooperation should be managed through partnerships between Governments and major groups;**

(e) **Major groups should move beyond providing criticism to developing constructive solutions to help Governments to formulate appropriate policies and programmes;**

(f) **Civil society should be more informed about its rights and its potential to participate more actively in the governmental decision-making process;**

(g) **The local Agenda 21 process provides a good model and means for the involvement of civil society and consideration should be given to adapting it for use at the national level;**

(h) **Assistance from Governments and intergovernmental organizations is needed for establishing and strengthening local youth councils;**

(i) **Corporate social responsibility and accountability in relation to environmental regulations should be encouraged to promote business ethics and corporate behaviour that is environmentally friendly and enhances sustainable development;**

(j) **Partnerships between the business community, civil society and Governments are instrumental for the implementation of sustainable development policies and programmes and should be encouraged and actively promoted.**

D. Governance and public administration

45. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(a) **Sound macroeconomic policies, functional democratic institutions and proactive civil society initiatives, including the role of youth, should be promoted as the basis for sustainable development, poverty alleviation and employment generation;**

(b) **Most countries with economies in transition have developed good framework legislation, but the main current concern is to develop the sub-laws and regulatory framework for implementing that legislation. Governments and civil society should assume more responsibility for facilitating and monitoring implementation;**

(c) **Coordination, coherence and dialogue between all relevant government departments and other stakeholders should be a priority at all stages of implementing sustainable development, especially for national strategies and plans;**

(d) **Economic instruments should be developed to provide people with incentives to protect the environment;**

(e) **The needs of the poor and of marginalized groups should be clearly defined, and policies should be more effectively designed to improve their living conditions, with special emphasis given to the land restitution process;**

(f) **The capacity of national public administrations to formulate and implement pro-poor policies should be strengthened, including through professional rather than political appointments at appropriate civil service levels;**

(g) **Governments should explore measures that can mobilize additional internal resources to implement sustainable development. Adequate financial resources, technology transfer and technical assistance should be provided by bilateral and multilateral donors at the national and local levels — including civil society, as appropriate — to support countries with economies in transition to implement sustainable development;**

(h) **To overcome resource constraints, partnerships between the public and private sectors should be facilitated and fostered to provide services to meet the basic needs of the poor, in particular access to clean water, affordable energy and health services;**

(i) **An enabling environment should be created for local business development and investors, both domestic and foreign, including the promotion of active labour market policies;**

(j) **To address the issue of extreme poverty, access to credit should be enhanced for small and micro-businesses, with clear guidelines and mechanisms for the disbursement of such credits.**

E. The role of regional organizations

46. The Workshop made the following recommendations:

(a) **The essential role that regional commissions and other regional/subregional organizations have been playing to enhance national capacities at the policy and institutional levels for promoting good governance for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation has proved effective and should be further strengthened;**

(b) **Based on countries' institutional arrangements, decentralization should be promoted. Local authorities should be empowered to collect local taxes to enable them to provide high-quality public services and to formulate financial planning that is more predictable and realistic;**

(c) **Implementation of local Agenda 21 initiatives should be strengthened at all stages, from planning to realization.**